DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 311 555 EA 021 326

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TITLE Political Change in a School District Leading to Cultural Change in a High School.
PUB DATE Mar 89
NOTE 25p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Francisco, CA, March 27-31, 1989).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Educational Administration; *Educational Environment; Educational Policy; High Schools; *Organizational Climate; *Politics of Education; *School Business Relationship; *School Community Relationship

ABSTRACT

To construct the outlines of a theoretical model relating contextual political change in a school district to cultural organizational change in a school within the district, a political change in a specific school district and the resultant cultural change in one of the district's high schools were analyzed. The school district, chosen to ensure a level of generalizability, had a student enrollment of about 10,000, had two high schools whose student enrollments were 1,000 and 1,200, respectively, and had experienced important political changes between 1977 and 1985 as increasing suburbanization occurred. Retrospective methods associated with the Dissatisfaction Theory of Democracy were used to collect data regarding the political change within the district, and traditional qualitative field methods were utilized to collect data concerning the cultural change of the high school. Theoretically, policy changes based on changed community member values do have an impact on individual school culture. The analysis showed that the in-migration of new business, industry, and families that transformed the community values drove important political changes within the school board that led to the appointment of a new superintendent and to policy changes that affected individual schools within the district. (8 references) (KM)

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POLITICAL CHANGE IN A SCHOOL DISTRICT LEADING TO CULTURAL CHANGE IN A HIGH SCHOOL

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This paper was prepared for presentation at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, California, March, 1989.

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Objectives

This paper is a preliminary draft of a report of a study which has two objectives, one narrow and the other broad. The narrow objective is to describe and analyze a political change in a school district and the resultant cultural change in one of the district's high schools. Both the structure and dynamics of the political and cultural changes are described and analyzed. The broad purpose of the paper is to present the outlines of a theoretical analysis relating contextual political change in a school district to cultural organizational change in a school within the district. It should be emphasized that since data analysis is still underway, the conclusions regarding both purposes of the study must be regarded as tentative.

Theoretical Perspectives

Because this study links political community change with cultural organizational change, two somewhat distinct theoretical perspectives guided data collection and analysis. For purposes of describing and analyzing the structure, processes, and consequences associated with the political change in a school district, the Dissatisfaction Theory of Democracy (Iannaccone & Lutz, 1972; Lutz & Iannaccone, 1987) was employed. And, for purposes of describing and analyzing the structure, processes, and consequences associated with the cultural change in a high school, the related concepts of cultural project (Mitchell, Ortiz, & Mitchell, 1987), leadership (Reed, Krysinski, Gougeon, & Furman, 1988), and social control employing authority, and power (Spady & Mitchell, 1977; Mitchell & Spady, 1983) were utilized.

Research Methods

For purposes of collecting data regarding political change in a school district, retrospective methods associated with the Dissatisfaction Theory were used. These included collection of indicator data regarding changes in community member values, changes in community member participation with respect to school board elections, changes in school board member values, and changes in school policies (Iannaccone & Lutz, 1970; Lutz & Iannaccone, 1978).

For purposes of collecting data regarding the cultural changes in a high school, traditional qualitative field methods were used (Lofland & Lofland, 1984). These included semi-structured, open-ended interviews, participant observation, and document collection. Field data were directly recorded as field notes during the course of data collection. In collecting field data, special attention was given to collecting data regarding the leadership of the principal in the cultural change of the school organization.

Data Sources

In order to limit the scope of the study with the intention of simplifying data collection and analysis, yet providing enough variety to insure a level of generalizability, it was decided that the district selected for the site of the study should have not more than two high schools each containing grades nine through twelve and have student enrollments of not more than 1,200 students each. Additionally, in order to investigate the relationship between political change in a school district and the culture change in a high school, the school district selected for the site of the study should have recently experienced a period of rather intense social and political change.

The school district selected for the site of the study had a student enrollment of about 10,000 students, and the two high schools in the district had enrollments of about 1,000 and 1,200 students respectively. Between the years 1977 and 1985 the district experienced important political changes as the district became increasingly suburbanized.

For purposes of confidentiality in reporting the study, pseudonyms are used. In the report, the school district is referred to as "Riverton School District," the superintendent of the district at the time data were collected is referred to as "Dr. Michael D. Robertson," the high school is referred to as "Riverton High School," and the principal of the high school is named "Mr. James E. Rogers."

Limitations

There are two inherent limitations in the study which should be noted. The cultural change in the high school investigated only involves the certified staff. Although exceedingly important, the change investigated neither includes high school students nor classified staff members.

Significance

The study reported in the paper has theoretical, substantive and practical significance. At a theoretical level, the reported study proposes a theoretical analysis describing the relationship of the culture of an organization to the political context of the organization. At a substantive level, the study demonstrates the relationship between the organizational culture of a high school and the political context of the district in which the school is located. At a practical level, the reported study suggest the conditions under which, the process by which, and the degree to which high school principals can initiate and manage change in the organizational culture of a high school.

The Riverton Community, School District, and Superintendent

The Riverton School District is part of a bedroom community lying to the east of a larger metropolitan area in a northwest state. Several small rural communities as well as a number of middle class subdivisions are served by the district. A major east-west arterial containing six lanes of traffic fronts several miles of businesses and a major shopping center in the district. Industrial parks are located to the south and north of the district. Small farms also bound the north and south, as well as the east edge of the district.

In 1988 there were about 10,000 students housed in twenty school buildings. In each of the two high schools there were about 1,000 students, and each of the five junior high schools had enrollments over 400 students. The thirteen elementary schools in the district housed about 5,000 students. Following a number of years of increased student enrollment in the district, the enrollment reached 11,200 in 1978. In the following years student enrollment declined, and by 1988 the enrollment had almost stabilized. In 1986 the assessed valuation in the district was 1.2 billion dollars and was expected to increase at a moderate rate. Following a period of relative instability, school board membership stabilized in 1986.

Dr. Michael D. Robertson was appointed superintendent in 1986 and assumed his position in July of that year. Prior to his appointment as Superintendent of Riverton School District, he had held one prior superintendency in a neighboring state. Shortly after Robertson arrived, the district received a Danforth Foundation Grant which focused on district goals. The grant funded several retreats and visitations which allowed for close and continued contact between the school board and the superintendent.

Within two months after Robertson's arrival, several important changes were made in the central office. The central office was reorganized, and administrative personnel were transferred and/or had their responsibilities redefined. Within two years after his arrival, the district had developed a twenty-year plan for facilities which included school closure, remodeling, and building. Additionally, the district office was moved to a site large enough to house all the central office staff including support services.

After Robertson had been superintendent a short time, he assessed the central office to be a "family of people who teased and played, but who did not work." He also perceived the district to have a high degree of "professional incest," this is to say a large number of relatives and friends of administrators were employed in the district. He believed a sense of professionalism including accountability and integrity needed to be developed throughout the district. His motto hangs in his office, "Let justice be the measure and integrity the plumbline."

He believes that the changes he has instituted, particularly in the area of personnel, "directly attacked the culture of the district."

Social, Economic, and Political Change in the School District

The Dissatisfaction Theory of Democracy articulated by Iannaccone and Lutz (1970) and elaborated by Lutz and Iannaccone (1978) describes the political process, the contextual factors which affect the process, and the consequences of the process whereby the citizens in reform governmental systems, particularly local school districts, make their values manifest in terms of public policy. Various interpretations of the Dissatisfaction Theory have been offered, and details of the theory will not be presented here. However, for purposes of this report it is useful to consider the Dissatisfaction Theory as consisting of four related theoretical political factors (Reed, 1985): (1) Community member values, (2) citizen participation with respect to school board elections, (3) school board member values, and (4) school district policies.

In the Dissatisfaction Theory, these factors are related in a causal chain: Change in community member values leads to change in citizen participation with respect to school board elections, which in turn leads to change in school board member values, and which in turn leads to change in school policies. Since reform governmental systems retard considerably the linkage between changes in community member values and citizen participation, the causal chain appears episodic rather than continuous. It should be noted that the name of the Dissatisfaction Theory as the <u>Dissatisfaction</u> Theory arises from dissatisfaction which occurs among citizens when their values and public policies become incompatible.

Employing the theoretical factors and the relationships among these factors, the Dissatisfaction Theory is used to analyze the political context of the Riverton School District.

<u>Change in Community Values</u>

Change in the values of community members is a long-term process and requires retrospective review of changes in district demographic characteristics. The indicators used to assess changes in community values are: (1) Changes in assessed valuation of property within the district and (2) changes in student enrollment (Iannaccone & Lutz, 1970). These data were collected for the seventeen years prior to 1988, the year the data were collected for the present study.

The assessed valuation in the district increased from 89.5 million to 1.3 billion dollars during the seventeen years between 1971 and 1988. This translates to an increase of more than 1,300% which is significant even when accounting for the rate of inflation.

Several factors influenced this dramatic increase. A large industrial park located on the north side of the district expanded in recent years. The areas adjacent to the district as well as areas contained within the district are prime property for industrial development. A major business strip extends the width of the district and has grown during the seventeen year period. One of the region's three major shopping centers was developed within district boundaries. Numerous housing developments have been built giving the district the character of a bedroom community. The population center in the district has continued to move east; in 1986 the population center was eight blocks west of were it is currently located. Much of the expansion can be linked to the World Exposition that was held in the region in 1974. Subsequent to the Exposition, the region experienced considerable business and industrial development. The year immediately following the exposition saw an increase in assessed valuation of 148%, or about 169 million dollars. The increases in assessed valuation began in 1970, about the time the exposition site was announced, and continued until 1983. During that time period the average rate of assessed valuation increase was slightly over 30% per year. Since that time, although valuation has continued to climb, the annual rate has been below 11% with the average rate of increase of about 3.2%.

Student enrollments also climbed steadily from 1971 to 1978, when enrollment peaked at 11,202 full time equivalent (FTE) students. Between 1979 and 1988 student enrollment declined at a average of about 160 pupils per year, with a student enrollment of 9,603 in October, 1988. The largest number of students were lost between 1980 and 1981, when the enrollment decreased by 2.7%, or 296 students. The rate of decline is decreasing. Between 1978 and 1982 student enrollment declined by 9.4%; whereas, between 1982 and 1988 enrollment declined by 5.6%. The lowest number of students were lost between 1987 and 1988, when enrollment diminished by only about 0.8% or 81 students.

When the enrollment data are examined by grade levels, it is apparent that the greatest decline has been in the secondary grades, particularly in the two high schools which house grades nine through twelve. The elementary grades, after experiencing a decline of approximately 600 students between 1979 and 1984, have increased student enrollment slightly since 1984. There has also been a change in the manner in which students are counted; prior to 1980, the one-half time kindergarten students were counted as one full-time equivalent; whereas, they are now counted as .5 FTE. This had an impact of about a 300 FTE decrease in the elementary enrollment. The secondary program, grades 10 through 12 in particular, has decreased by 600 students since 1978. A decline in enrollment has also taken place at the junior high level, although the rate of decline is not as steep as at the high school. This trend of increasing elementary and declining secondary enrollments has also occurred in several other districts in the region.

There has been an influx in lower middle class and middle-class families since the early seventies, reflective of the population that has come to supply the work force for new industry and business. These has been some growth in the middle-level management group who occupy the new housing developments in the district. The majority of new housing has been in the middle price range and generally sells for below $100,000.

Change in the Nature of Citizen Political Participation

Changes in the nature of citizen political participation is identified by reviewing election records for a time period prior to superintendent succession. When district patrons become dissatisfied with the policy making board of the district, they use the election process to force change. Indicators of change in political activity on the part of community are: (1) Changes in the number of candidates running for the trustee district positions and (2) changes in the values of the Thorsted Conflict Index (Lutz & Iannaccone, 1978). In this study, the following changes were also investigated: (1) The number of resignations and board appointments to unexpired terms, (2) the number of primary elections, and (3) the number of board positions open during an election year.

Prior to 1973, school board members generally served two terms; primary elections to narrow the candidates were not necessary, because there were never more than two candidates and often only one. Although there were changes in the board membership, there was little conflict surrounding these changes reflecting a high degree of satisfaction with the district. An event indicative of the satisfaction occurred in 1969 when the trustee district boundaries were redrawn. After the boundaries were redrawn, the incumbent board member no longer resided in Trustee District #3, the district from which he had been elected. After redistricting, he ran unopposed in Trustee District #2, his new district, and won.

The level of satisfaction began to decline in the mid-70's, reached its nadir in the late 70's and early 80's, and remained at a low level until the mid-80's. Since 1973 the number of candidates for each position increased from one-or-two per open position to one-to-four per position. The number of candidates who chose to run for open positions also increased after 1977. During the time period from 1965 to 1975, in every four year cycle there were no more than seven candidates for the five board positions, and no more than five seats were up for election. After that time the average number of candidates who ran during a four year cycle increased to 9.8, while the average number of seats up for election increased to 6.3. The average number of candidates per position between 1963 and 1971 was 1.2; while in the decade after 1973, the average was 1.6 candidates per position. Using a four year running average of candidates per position, the highest number was in the 1977-1979 election cycle, when the average was 2.2 candidates per position.

The increase in the number of individuals desiring to seek election to the school board caused primaries to be held prior to the general elections. Five primaries for four different trustee districts were held since 1973; prior to that time primaries were unnecessary. The only trustee district which has not held a primary in the past thirty years is Trustee District #5. The first primary occurred in 1973 in Trustee District #2 and again in the same district in 1975. Other primaries occurred in 1979 in District #3, in 1983 in Trustee District #4, and in 1987 in District #1.

An increase in the number of board appointments has occurred since 1974. There have been six board appointment since that time, while in the decade before there were only two appointments, both of whom ran unopposed in subsequent elections. In every non-election year from 1974 through 1982, there was at least one board appointment, with two appointments made in 1978. All of these appointments ran for re-election as incumbents; two were opposed, and all but one were successful in their bids.

The number of trustee districts open per election year has also increased. This has been a result of the number of resignations and appointments. When board members resign or die during the first two years of their four years terms, the board is required to appoint individuals to fill the vacant positions until the next election year. For the period included in the study, there were four such election years: 1977, 1979, 1981, and 1983.

An index often used to indicate a change in citizen participation is the Thorsted Conflict Index (Lutz & Iannaccone, 1978). This is an index derived by calculating the percentage ratio of the average votes received per incumbent to the average votes per seat available; the ratio is then subtracted from 100%. The result is an numerical index reflecting the level of political conflict. In the Riverton School District conflict was virtually non-existent prior to 1973 but escalated sharply that year when both incumbents did not file for re-election. Between 1973 and 1983 the conflict levels ranges from 53% in 1973 to a high of 62% in 1983. In three of the election years, 1975, 1981, and 1985, conflict was nonexistent. In all of these elections, only one candidate ran per position, and all but one were incumbents. The extremes in these indices reflect the discomfort this community has with political conflict; the number of resignations and appointments which created changes in the board membership support this conclusion.

Change in School Board Values

The third link in the causal chain occurs following a change in the level of community political participation. The change in community participation with respect to school board elections leads to change of school board member values. Indicators of change of board member values include: (1) The change in the number of incumbent school board member defeats, (2) a change in the rate of change in school board membership computed on a running four-year cycle, (3) a change in the gender composition of the school board membership, and (4) a change in the socio-economic composition of the school board.

Incumbent defeats indicate that the community is dissatisfied with the status quo. When a defeat occurs at the polls, it also indicates that the incumbent is not responding to the community. There are times when incumbents choose not to run, because they believe they would not win in an election. Most of these cases are regarded as incumbent defeats.

Four incumbents defeats have occurred since 1977, four years after the first primary was held. Two of the defeats occurred at the polls, the first in 1977 when the incumbent was defeated by a 70% margin in the general election. The second defeat occurred in 1979 when an incumbent who had been appointed nine months earlier, was defeated by a 25% margin. The unsuccessful incumbent was reappointed in July of 1980, when the insurgent accepted an administrative position within the district. In 1981 none of the position were contested, and each candidate in the three positions received 100% of the votes cast.

In 1983 two incumbents were reelected; one had been previously appointed to complete an unexpired term. However during this same 1983 election, two other incumbents decided not to run for reelection. These involved the positions in Trustee Districts #3 and #4. Closer examination of issues in these elections allowed for the identification of these as incumbent defeats. There was significant conflict over the position for Trustee District #4. A primary was necessary, because three candidates filed for the position. The successful candidate in this position campaigned on the issue that the district central office should not be relocated at a certain site. It is important to note that this individual was board chairman at the time the district office was relocated two years later. With respect to the position in Trustee District #3, the only candidate who filed did so in an effort to force the incumbent to run a campaign and "make promises" for which he could "later be held accountable." As noted above, the incumbent chose not to run. Although neither of these board turnovers occurred at the polls, they have been classified as incumbent defeats, because the candidates conducted issue oriented campaigns with the intention of changing school policy if elected.

In 1987 there was conflict over the position in Trustee

District #1. Four candidates ran for the position none of whom was an incumbent. However, this election was not identified as an incumbent defeat because the candidate who was elected had been endorsed by the former trustee.

If board membership change is examined in four year cycles, then a high degree of change is evident. For example, during the mid-60's and early 70's there were five elections during a four-year cycle with five-to-six candidates for these positions and a change in membership of between one and three members. Between 1975 and 1984, the number of candidates and the number of elections increased during each four-year cycle. The number of candidates increased to a range of seven-to-thirteen, while the number of elections increased from the usual five to an average of six or seven.

The rate of turnover of school board members has increased from 2 new members to 4.5 new members per four year average. The number of open positions increased from two or three per election year to three or four per election year. This resulted from an increase in the number of resignations and appointments to unexpired terms; six such resignations have occurred since 1973.

The number seats up for election increased as a result of the numerous resignations and appointments which required that the appointees run for unexpired terms. School board member had resigned prior to completion of their terms, and new members were appointed and running for unexpired terms. Prior to 1983, in every case the incumbent board member ran unopposed. In the 1983 election, however, the incumbent was successful in her bid for the position by a 4.7% margin. The narrow margin of the win and the fact that the position was contested were indicative of the dissatisfaction in the community.

Other factors which indicate change in the participation of the community are the composition of the board, both by gender and by socio-economic status. Prior to 1973 there had been no woman members on the board; in fact no women had ever run for election. In 1973, however, women were elected to the positions in Trustee Districts #2 and #5. Since that time the position in Trustee District #5 has always been held by a woman, while the position in Trustee District #1 has been held by a woman since 1980. The board position in Trustee District #3 is the only one which has never been held by a woman. Since 1980, there have been seven different women who have served on the school board, two of whom were appointed and later reelected as incumbents. In 1988 there were three women on the board who constituted a majority.

The social classes represented on the school board have changed. In contrast to the time prior to 1985, the board has become largely professionalized. Of the three current women trustees, two are attorneys and one is a prominent physician's wife. The two remaining positions are held by men. One is a

blue-collar worker, while the other is a dentist in the community. The blue-collar worker occupies the only position which has never been held by a woman. The professional belongs to the Mormon church and holds the longest tenure of any board member, over ten years.

Change in School District Policy

In most cases when the school board values change, the superintendent is asked to resign. In the case of the superintendent prior to Dr. Robertson, his contract was not extended two years prior to his retirement. Additionally, he was not given a pay raise. Nonextension of a superintendent's contract coupled with no salary increase is typically used as indicator of involuntary superintendent turnover.

It is important to note that the superintendent prior to Robertson became the third superintendent in succession to retire from Riverton. As one board member stated, "We had become a retirement center for superintendents." The Riverton School District was ready for a change, and when the superintendent announced his retirement a year in advance, a search was initiated.

In initiating a search for a new superintendent, the board reviewed several national consulting groups before contracting with an individual from a neighboring state to conduct a search. Several candidates and a year later, Dr. Michael D. Robertson was hired. Robertson was in his early 50's with a prior superintendency to his credit. He was in the middle years of his career and had an earned doctorate from an Ivy League University. To his new position he brought experience and vision.

What follows is a description of some of the changes Superintendent Robertson has made in the two and one-half years he has been in the Riverton School District.

The most immediate changes Robertson made involved the organization structure of central office staff. Some of these changes were characterized by shifts in responsibilities, and others involved transfers of personnel. Within three months the position of the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum was changed from a line position to a staff position. Additionally, the Assistant Superintendent for Personnel's responsibility for hiring and assigning personnel was removed. The Business Manager's responsibility was confined to making only business and financial decisions; he had been previously involved with making educational decisions. One of the high school principals was transferred into the central office as Director of Secondary Education, while the individual who had held that position was reassigned as a junior high school principal. The Director of Elementary Education was allowed to remain in that position for only one year before being reassigned to a principalship.

By Fall 1987 both Assistant Superintendents had left the district. The Supervisor of Personnel was appointed as the Acting Director of Personnel, and a year later was named Director of Personnel Services. The position of the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum remained unfilled for one year. In the fall of 1988 the position was retitled "Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Staff Development" and a woman was hired to fill the position. She had recently received her doctorate and had experience as an assistant superintendent.

Other changes involved the Director of Maintenance. Financial resources were increased for maintenance allowing the director to provide more effective services and respond to requests more efficiency. Additionally, school transportation was added to the Director's responsibilities, and an assistant was hired. The additional resources increased the Director's capabilities and "ability to get the job done."

In Superintendent Robertson's relatively short tenure, both high school principals were replaced, one immediately, as noted above, when he was transferred to the district office and the other when he retired a year later. One of the high school principalships, as mentioned previously, was filled with an insider who was transferred from a junior high principalship, while the other was filled with an outsider hired from another district. A part-time Public Relation Manager was also hired.

The circumstances surrounding the hiring of the outside high school principal for Riverton High School, Mr. James E. Rogers, warrants some further discussion. Although the previous principal, a long time insider, had a solid reputation with the high school faculty, there was a feeling among some school board members when Superintendent Robertson was hired that the principal of Riverton High School "had to go." Since the principal's retirement was eminent, the new superintendent did not need to take action on the board members' feelings. Notwithstanding the principal's retirement, the principal turnover can be considered involuntary. In order to replace the retiring principal, a search committee was appointed comprised of staff and parents. Following the screening, the Search Committee forwarded the names of two candidates to the superintendent. One was an insider who held the position of vice principal at Riverton High School, the other was an outsider with experience as a high school principal. The committee favored the vice principal. The outside candidate would not accept the position, and the inside candidate was not acceptable to Superintendent Robertson. The position was reopened, and James E. Rogers was encouraged to apply. Over the objections of the staff on the search committee and the faculty at Riverton High School, Superintendent Robertson named Rogers as the principal of Riverton High School in May, 1987.

In addition to changes in personnel, Superintendent Robertson also made some important changes in personnel policies.

Important among these were related to the change in qualifications necessary for administrative staff and the new focus on staff development. Consistent with the focus on staff development, the position of Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, as noted previously, was changed to Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Staff Development. Additionally, the position of Coordinator of Staff Development was created and filled.

A third area of policy that was changed following the arrival of Superintendent Robertson was concerned with facilities. This area related to considering policies regarding the architecture, placement, and maintenance of school buildings and other facilities. Faced with enrollments which had been declining for eleven years, it was evident that some schools would need to be closed. Since the district had had a tacit policy of "deferred maintenance," policies were developed for routine maintenance and renovation of older facilities. As one board member stated, "We did a lot of dumb stuff; we just re-roofed the high school for $75,000 because we procrastinated." The other major issue in facilities was the purchase of property to build a new central office. Guided by the superintendent, plans for each of these were developed. The board created a twenty year plan that was divided into five four-year plans, each of which had individual one-year plans. These plans included closure of a junior high building, building of elementary schools, and building another high school.

Community Changes Leading to Policy Changes

It has been demonstrated that in the Riverton School District there was a shift in community values. The assessed value increased significantly as new business and industries moved in and student enrollment increased. These indicate that the Riverton School District was losing its rural character and becoming suburbanized. The indigenous rural community members were being outnumbered by new families holding different values and different expectations for the education of their children. The Riverton School District was changing from a sacred to a secular community (Iannaccone & Lutz, 1972). The new community members were not completely satisfied with the Riverton Public Schools.

Following on the heels of the change in community member values was increased political participation with respect to school board elections. This is demonstrated by the increase in the number of candidates who ran for each position and the number of appointments to the board, as well as the elevated values of the Thorsted Conflict Index. The Board of Trustees of the Riverton School district was not responding with policy change congruent with the expectations and values held by the new community members.

The increased citizen participation with respect to school

board election eventually lead to a change in school board member values. These were more congruent with those held by the new community members. The change in school board member values are indicated by the incumbent school board member defeats and the increase in the rate of change of school board members. The change in board membership with respect to gender and socio-economic composition also indicates an important change in school board member values.

The change in school board member values have led to important changes in school district policies. Important among these are the involuntary turnover of the previous superintendent and the replacement of the superintendent with an experienced outsider, Dr. Michael D. Robertson. Other policy changes include the reorganization of responsibilities in the district office and involuntary changes in school principalships, particularly at the two high schools. For purposes of the present study, the involuntary principal turnover at Riverton High School and the replacement of the principal with an experienced outsider is a very important policy change. Additional policy changes include long range facilities planning and maintenance, position qualifications for administrators, and staff development for teachers.

In the Riverton School District, the dominant values of the community changed leading to an increase in participation in school board elections. The increased political participation eventually lead to the defeat of incumbent board members and their replacement with members who held different values. The new board members initiated a new policy direction for the district with the involuntary turnover of the superintendent and the appointment of outsider Robertson. In turn, Superintendent Robertson has initiated substantial policy changes. Important among these include involuntary personnel changes in the high school principalships. The appointment of outsider James C. Rogers as principal of Riverton High School has initiated a host of changes in the school.

In the following sections, the changes Rogers has made at Riverton High School will be explored and processes whereby he has made these changes will be examined.

Riverton High School

Riverton High School is located in wooded area surrounded by a modest older housing subdivision. The twenty-five year old buildings are one story. Two main buildings sit parallel to the road one behind the other. A third, newer, building is located off to the side of the main buildings. The three buildings contain mostly classrooms which open onto central corridors, and lining the corridors are student lockers. At the rear of the school is a music building, a gymnasium with locker rooms, and a shop building. Also at the rear of the school are athletic fields, tennis courts, and a football stadium. The front of the

school is marked by a marquee which stands in front of the visitor parking lot. Large glass doors opening on to a foyer provide the main entrance of the school. The administrative offices are adjacent to the foyer. It is in the administrative office complex where the school principal's office is located.

There are over fifty teacher employed at Riverton High School to teach the nearly 1,000 students. In addition to the teachers, there are about fifteen support staff. The administrators and quasi administrators include the principal, Mr. Rogers, two vice principals, an athletic director, and several counselors. The students at Riverton High are well fed and well dressed sporting contemporary teen fashions. Among the nearly 1,000 students, there is only one black face.

Riverton High School provides a standard high school curriculum. A full college preparatory course sequence is offered. Additionally, electives in fine arts, vocational training, and physical education are available. At the school "programs" for "at risk kids" have been recently added to the curriculum. The extra-curriculum, or "student activities program" centers around athletics, although student government and a host of student interest clubs are also important.

In all respects--students, teachers, administrators, curriculum, extra-curriculum, and facilities--Riverton High School is a very traditional comprehensive American high school.

Leadership and Cultural Change at Riverton High School

The term culture has a variety of definitions and conceptions. For purpose of the analysis in this report, organizational culture is considered to be, "shared meanings (used to typify and evaluate everyday events and activities) and collective projects (which guide intentions, plans, and actions) (Mitchell, Ortiz, & Mitchell, 1987, p. 54)" of organizational members. Here the term project can be viewed as mental images or projections of plans yet to be fulfilled.

As is the case with the term culture, the term leadership has a broad variety of definitions and conceptions. For purposes of analysis in this report, leadership will be considered to be social control (Reed, Krysinski, Gougeon, & Furman, 1988) oriented to changing or stabilizing the organizational culture, this is to say the shared meaning and collective projects of organizational members.

Social control involves two important components. These include authority and power (Mitchell & Spady, 1983). Authority in leadership involves a leader inducing followers to voluntarily fulfill specified activities and personally hold desired projects. Power in leadership, on the other hand, involves a leader inducing followers to voluntarily or involuntarily display certain behaviors. Leadership style can be considered as the

presence and relative intensity of authority and power in leadership action.

Leadership associated with authority involves establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships which have an authentic and substantive character. These relationships are intrinsically fulfilling to both leader and followers. Arising out of the authentic and substantive relationships are symbols, both tangible and intangible, which are extrinsic to the relationships. The symbols, when separated from authority relationships, become power resources for leaders. Leadership associated with power arises when a leader manipulates these resources with the intent of controlling the behavior of followers.

Power resources can be viewed by followers as either rewarding or punishing. When leaders employ the former, voluntary behavior of followers results; when leaders employ the latter, involuntary yet compliant behavior of followers ensues. In order to avoid fear and anxiety associated with punishments, behavior of followers conforms to a leader's desires. It is important to underscore the notion that leadership associated with power can both voluntarily and involuntarily control the behavior of followers; whereas, only leadership associated with authority can induce followers to voluntarily fulfill specified activities and hold desired projects.

Authority relationships between a leader and followers can be analytically separated into four independent authority modes. These include charismatic, traditional, legal, and expert. Followers experience intimacy under a leader's charismatic authority and worthiness under traditional authority. Under legal authority, followers experience security and experience adequacy under expert authority.

Similar to authority relationships between a leader and followers, power relationships can be analytically separated into four corresponding independent modes. These include psychological, moral, contractual, and technical. Associated with each of these modes are rewarding and punishing resources. Followers experience acceptance when a leader employs rewarding psychological resources and rejection when punishing psychological resources are used. Honor is experienced by followers when a leader uses rewarding moral resources and shame when punishing moral resources are employed. Rewarding contractual resources used by a leader produce the experience of autonomy in followers, and punishing contractual resources produce a sense of coercion. The use of rewarding technical resources by a leader results in a sense of potency on the part of followers; where as, the use of punishing technical resources produces a feeling of manipulation.

The Culture of the High School before the New Principal

The faculty at Riverton High School is distinctly middle age. Most of the faulty members have been working at the school for a number of years; most have spent the majority of their professional careers as teachers at the school. The principal prior to Rogers had spent his entire professional career at Riverton High. In the mid-1950's he was hired as a beginning physics and mathematics teacher. He was regarded by his colleagues and students as an excellent teacher. During his career at Riverton High School, in addition to holding the positions of teacher and principal, he held the positions of chairman of the Science and Mathematics Department, counselor, and vice principal.

As perceived by the faculty, the principal prior to Rogers was "highly visible." During the school day he was constantly in the corridors, the student lunch room, and faculty lounges. Faculty did not expect to find him in his office or off the campus very often. While teachers were teaching, the principal rarely, if ever, made either formal or informal visits to classrooms.

Prior to the arrival of Principal Rogers, the faculty experienced themselves as a close-knit "family" and regarded the principal as a "father" or "godfather." One woman faculty member in her forties stated, "He treated me like a daughter." The principal good naturedly gave faculty members "fatherly advice" regarding their personal problems and referred to the faculty as "my family."

Each school year, the members of the faculty looked forward to and enjoyed a number of traditional activities together. The annual ski trip, the annual bus trip to a professional athletic event, the annual Christmas party, and the monthly men's poker party were activities faculty members enjoyed and looked forward to each year. The weekly faculty meetings were seen as a time for fun and mutual joking. Each week these meetings were started with the principal telling a series of jokes. At the end of each month, the principal personally delivered the pay checks to each faculty member.

The principal and faculty regarded Riverton High School as a "good place to work" with an outstanding program and a unique character. The school was a good place to work because the principal supported the teachers and gave them considerable latitude in their work as teachers. The school was outstanding because of the number of student graduates who won regional, state, and national honors. These honors provided public testimony to the "outstanding academic program" at Riverton. And, the school was unique because of the close-knit faculty.

A few faculty members, however, were not satisfied with their circumstances and the leadership prior to Rogers. New

faculty members were rarely allowed to teach the "cream courses," this is to say the advanced classes for capable students. Year-after-year these courses were assigned to the teachers who were colleagues of the principal when he was a teacher. In frustration, new yet capable teachers after several years at Riverton High sought transfers to the other high school in the school district. Additionally, the principal's style did not appeal to all faculty. One teacher remarked, "It almost made me throw up."

However, notwithstanding the few dissenting teachers, the faculty in a genuine sense regarded the school as outstanding, their administration as supportive, and their colleagues as friends. The faculty also affectionately regarded their principal as their leader.

Prior to the arrival of Principal Rogers, there was a well established organizational culture at Riverton High School which had developed over at least a twenty year period. Collectively the faculty interpreted their work as teachers as outstanding; the honors students received supported and reinforced this interpretation. Additionally, the principal and faculty viewed the most important program at Riverton as the "family" led and supported by the principal as the "father." Their understanding of their individual and collective work as teachers and faculty members was seen and interpreted in terms of this image or projection. In terms of Mitchell, Ortiz, and Mitchell, (1987, p. 148), the collective organizational culture of the teachers and administrators in the school was oriented toward viewing "schooling as the organization of programs" and "teaching as dedicated effort."

The Vision of the New Principal, Mr. Rogers

Principal Rogers is a trained engineer with considerable naval experience. After leaving the nuclear submarine corps, he taught high school physics for several years. His first principalship was in an inner city junior high school. In his terms, he "turned it around." He has also been the principal of a small rural high school and the principal of a middle-size suburban high school.

Principal Rogers has a clear "vision" of what he regards as a good high school. His idea is embodied in Riverton High School's current "vision statement," and the school's recent "Progressive Discipline Model."

The school's vision statement is, "Quality Education through Caring, Commitment, and High Expectations. In developing the vision statement, faculty members decided on "Quality Education through Caring and Commitment;" Rogers insisted on the addition of "and High Expectations."

The "High Expectations" part of the slogan does not just

apply to the teacher-student relationship; more importantly it applies to the principal-teacher relationship. Principal Rogers has high expectations for the teachers Riverton High regarding their work as teachers. He is a believer in teacher-centered instruction. Instruction during class periods should be carefully planned and integrated into a larger unit. Class time should be used effectively, instruction should engage the students, and teacher questioning should be done in such a way that it involves students. Competence, energy and enthusiasm are valued. In contrast, providing students with periods of independent study is regarded by Rogers as grossly ineffective instruction. In his regular and frequent visits to classrooms, he evaluates teachers in terms of "a direct instruction model."

The "Riverton High School Progressive Discipline Model" was developed by a committee of parent, faculty, and administrators several months after Rogers arrived at Riverton. Rogers insisted that the school have a "discipline policy" because of what he perceived as differential and preferential discipline given to various individual students and groups of students. Additionally, he perceived attendance at school and in classes, as well as punctuality, to be excessively lax. As with the "High Expectation" aspect of the vision statement, the "Progressive Discipline Model" was designed to convey an important message to teacher in addition to students. The orderly and safe conduct of students at Riverton High School is important, and teachers are expected to assist in this endeavor. The administration will support teachers in very specific ways, as well as act independently, to insure that students conduct themselves appropriately as young adults.

Several relatively immediate curricular changes also reflect Principal Rogers vision. He perceived the school and faculty to have a rather singular emphasis on and recognition of high achieving students. Specific assistance to and support for "at risk" students was not an important part of the school's curriculum. During his first year as principal, Rogers selected several very capable teachers to develop and provide "programs for at risk student."

Rogers' vision of a high school is a school in which the teachers are enthusiastic and technically competent, and the students conduct themselves appropriately as young adults. Additionally, the vision includes offering and encouraging participation in academic programs by both students and faculty for the full range of students who attend the school. In the terms of Mitchell, Ortiz, and Mitchell (1987, p. 148), the vision of Principal Rogers is oriented toward "schooling as the execution of tasks" and "teaching as appropriate performance."

Principal Leadership and Change

The question emerges, How and to what degree has Principal Rogers been able to get the faculty to assume his vision?

Mr. Dale Rogers is an energetic and compelling person. He arrives at work early and leaves late. Guided by his vision, he leads intuitively and spontaneously.

During the summer months after Rogers was appointed principal of Riverton High School and before the school year began, he initiate two important activities. One involved changing the appearance of the school, the second involved interviewing each faculty member individually. Arriving at the school, Rogers found the school plant in disrepair. Consistent with the new district emphasis on school maintenance, he was able to have the corridors of the school repainted and the grounds "spruced up." Additionally, he had the entrance foyer of the school redesigned. By changing some of the furniture, the foyer was transformed from looking like a student lounge to an area giving the impression of a formal school entrance. During the maintenance and redesign work, Rogers scheduled and held individual interviews with faculty members. During the interviews the faculty members had the opportunity to introduce themselves to the new principal and give their perceptions of the school. Similarly, Principal Rogers took the opportunity to begin introducing himself as the school principal to each of the faculty members. Collectively the interviews provided the principal a composite picture of the school, allowed him to identify problems, and provided him the opportunity to begin to convey his vision for the school to each faculty member.

Rogers' attention to developing the school's vision statement and discipline policy have been presented above. Through the building changes, interviews with teachers, and both the vision statement and discipline policy, Rogers both represented and interpreted (Mitchell, Ortiz, & Mitchell, 1987) his vision to faculty, staff, and students.

Rogers' first most striking action as principal occurred several days before the opening of the fall semester. After obtaining information from the faculty interviews, conversations with parents, and personal observations, he decided that the teacher who held the position of Director of Student Activities, who had the responsibility to supervise the student officers and direct the student government activities, "had to be replaced." Under the direction of the teacher, the supervision of the student government and elected student leaders was almost nonexistent. The student leaders, during the time they were assigned to their "leadership" class, "floated about the school." Rogers removed the teacher from the position of Director of Student activities, and he filled the position with a vigorous and energetic person who had a reputation of being an excellent teacher. The teacher who was removed from the position filed a

grievance against the principal on contractual grounds. The grievance was settled by the district compensating the removed teacher as prescribed by his contract, yet the removal was allowed to stand.

Following this first striking change, Principal Rogers continued to make many more. In the course of his first year as principal, he secured the resignations of two teachers and one coach all of whom had long been recognized by administrators, teachers, students, and parents as very ineffective. Additionally, he got the chairs of the high school subject departments, known as in the school as "Curriculum Coordinators," to begin engaging in curriculum development work. Furthermore, he replaced the athletic director and one vice principal.

As these and other personnel changes were being made, Principal Rogers explained them to faculty members. The resignations were explained in terms of "unhappy teachers trapped in positions which they dislike intensely." Other personnel changes were explained in terms of "serious over staffing which the district could not afford."

Along with the staffing changes, Principal Rogers personally provided "inservice instruction" regarding effective classroom instructional techniques and encouraged the faculty members to become technically competent, like himself, in the use of personal computers. The programs for "at risk" students were staffed with competent teachers and were explained by Rogers as being absolutely essential in a good high school.

In terms of the leadership as social control discussed above, Principal Rogers employs authority, charismatic and expert, to present and invite faculty members to embrace his vision or project. In an authentic way he both represents and interprets his project to faculty members individually and collectively. He initially presented and represented his vision through making important visible changes in the school building and grounds. Additionally, he presented and represented his vision through the school's new vision statement and discipline policy. He initially presented and interpreted his vision to individual faculty members through personal interviews. Now he continues to interpret his vision in meetings and private encounters.

For those who will not embrace and attempt to act on his project, Principal Rogers employs power to make changes. With respect to removing the teacher as Director of Student Activities and filling the position with another, he used technical and contractual power. In securing the resignations of the three teachers, he clearly employed technical followed by contractual power.

For those teachers who he senses attempt to embrace and act on his project, Principal Rogers employs charismatic and expert

authority to enhance changes. And for those teachers who have embraced and acted on his project, Principal Rogers uses charismatic authority to stabilize the changes.

The Emerging Culture of the High School

At the time data were collected for the study, Principal Rogers had been at Valley High School for seventeen months. Clearly the organizational culture of the high school is in transition. Some of the faculty experience their present situation in terms of the past. They look back to previous years with a deep sense of satisfaction; they see their present circumstance in terms of what they have lost, a stable group of congenial friends lead by an admirable person.

In contrast, some of the faculty members experience their present situations in terms of the future. They see themselves as becoming a collection of competent professionals who are able to meet the host of contemporary educational issues including "computers in the classroom," "at risk students" and "drug and alcohol abuse" as well as improved instruction with confidence and enthusiasm. They feel confident that their efforts in these and other related areas will be effective, recognized, and appreciated.

The organizational culture previous to Rogers can be characterized as a cohesive group of intimate friends who were primarily oriented to maintaining the group. The principal served simultaneously as the means for keeping the group cohesive and the symbol of the group. In contrast, the emerging culture under Rogers can be characterized as a group of professionals who are primarily oriented to providing quality education to students. Rogers has been instrumental in effecting the change, and in the minds of many faculty members, he is the symbol of the new organizational culture.

Summary of Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to describe and analyze a political change in a school district and the resultant cultural change in one of the district's high schools. Additionally, a purpose of the study was to present the outlines of a theoretical analysis relating contextual political change in a school district to cultural organizational change in a school within the district.

The analysis has shown that the dominant values of the community members of the Riverton School District changed during a period prior to 1985. The in-migration of new business, industry, and families transformed the character of the community form rural to suburban. The change in the dominant values led to dissatisfaction with school district policies. During and following the in-migration, political participation with respect to school board election increased substantially. The increased

political participation ultimately lead to incumbent defeat of school board members. The board members who defeated the incumbent board members brought new and different values to the school board. The new values stood behind and drove important policy changes. Important among these was the involuntary turnover of the superintendent and the appointment of a new superintendent, outsider Dr. Michael D. Robertson. Immediately after his appointment, Robertson began making some important policy changes within the district. One of these changes was the involuntary turnover of the principal at Riverton High School coupled with the appointment of outsider James E. Rogers as principal.

Principal Rogers brought to Riverton High School a new vision. His vision emphasized technical competence of teachers, orderly conduct of students, and academic programs for the full range of Riverton High's students. Immediately after his arrival at Riverton High, Rogers represented and interpreted his vision in very demonstrable ways. For the few teachers who indicated that they would neither embrace nor act on his vision, he used technical and contractual power to make changes. For the teachers whom he sensed would attempt to embrace and act on his vision, he employed charismatic and expert authority. And for the teachers who whole heartily embraced and acted on his vision, he employed charismatic authority.

At the time data were collected for the present study, the organizational culture of Riverton High School was in a state of transition. Prior to Rogers' arrival, the faculty experienced themselves as a group friends interested in maintaining their friendships. After Rogers arrival, the faculty has begun to experience themselves as a collection of professional intent upon providing effective instruction to students.

From a theoretical perspective, change in community member values does lead to increased citizen participation in school board elections. The increased participation in school board elections does lead to a substantial change in school board member values. This is accomplished through incumbent school board member defeat. Change in school board member values does lead to important changes in policy orientation. Changes in policy orientation are accomplished through the appointment of executives who hold values congruent with the dominant values on the school board.

Policy changes which have their basis in change in community member values do untimately have an impact on individual schools. The impact is accomplished by appointing principals who hold values congruent with the superintendent and the school board and have a well developed vision or project for their respective schools. Changes in schools are made by changing the culture of schools. Change of culture is accomplished through leadership which presents a clear, consistent, and practical vision to teachers and controls and conditions the actions of teachers

through the use of authority and power.

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